Tells the Facts and Names the Names

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Good idea!

"It's time to start making politicians wear the logos of their corporate sponsors on their suit jackets the way atheletes do."

— Teamster President Ron Carey

Smoke and Chains:

Bob Butterworth's Double Life

Early last summer, forty attorneys general from states across the country held a sensational press conference in Washington DC, in which they announced that the nation's four largest tobacco companies, led by Philip Morris, had agreed to shell out hundreds of billions of dollars to reimburse states for Medicaid money they had spent to provide care for smokers.

By dint of their crusade against tobacco, a number of these attorneys general have become famous. AG Bob Butterworth of Florida was seen on national TV pondering how many lives would have been saved if the industry had not lied to smokers about the dangers of tobacco. Another AG, Grant Woods of Arizona, told the press with a great show of anger that tobacco company CEOs were guilty of producing a product which "causes lung cancer, heart disease, and emphysema. ... Every place they've gone through the history of this industry, they have denied these allegations."

But as we shall now narrate, these same AGs have helped feed the nicotine addiction of a large, captive population: prisoners, now numbering over a million. In doing so, the attorneys general have eagerly downplayed the health risks associated with tobacco, as well as defended the right of states to manufacture cigarettes and to target minors. In short, the AGs are guilty of just about everything that they have charged the tobacco lords with doing.

Only five states — Minnesota, Texas, Idaho, Nebraska and Indiana — have banned smoking in prisons. Virtually all the others have made tobacco available at very low prices to generally indigent prisoners. Loose leaf tobacco is sold at most prisons in 7.5 ounce boxes, with no warnings at all of health risks, for as little as 68 cents. The percentage of prisoners who smoke varies from a high of 95 percent in the District of Columbia to a low of 75 percent in Florida.

Thomas Waugh, a prisoner in Florida, filed a lawsuit in federal court in Jacksonville seeking nicotine replacement patches from the state to help him overcome his tobacco habit. The defendant in the case, the Florida Department of Corrections (DOC), was represented by none other than that fierce foe of tobacco, Bob Butterworth, whom we met in the second paragraph of this story brooding publicly about lost lives.

In his Medicaid lawsuit against the tobacco industry, Butterworth the Good argued that nicotine is so habit forming that it "virtually extinguishes personal choice in those who become addicted". Furthermore, cigarette makers "capitalize upon the known addictive nature of nicotine. Nicotine addiction is similar to the addictions of illegal drugs such as heroin, cocaine and amphetamines."

Butterworth the Bad offered a rather different argument in the Waugh lawsuit. In a motion to dismiss, he claimed that nicotine isn't addictive and ridiculed Waugh, saying he could quit smoking simply by not buying cigarettes from the prison commissary. Waugh "is in no way entitled to medical intervention to 'cure' a habit which [he] himself continues to indulge and over which he has ultimate control", Butterworth virtuously proclaimed.

State AGs have also tried to evade a 1993 US Supreme Court ruling that exposure of non-smoking prisoners to second-hand smoke violates the eighth

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Our Little Secret

The Measure of a Man

Bill Clinton has cried at the funeral of Richard Nixon. He has thrown a birthday party for ARCO head Lowdrick Cook. The president has invited to the White House the New York Yankees and Chicago Bulls. He cozied up next to Tiger Woods and spent the night with Greg Norman. He congratulated Stephen Spielberg for his movie Schindler's List. He has dined with the CEOs of Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Raytheon and has had coffee with international fugitive Roger Tamraz, rightwing Cuban militants and Chinese arms dealers. But when American Jody Williams won the Nobel Peace prize for her uncompromising work on the ban on landmines, he couldn't even give her a contratulatory phone call. The curvature of the president's penis awaits medical assessment to test the truth of Paula Jones's allegation. About the curvature of the president's backbone there is no doubt.

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Dartmouth v. Third World

In a comic attempt to undercut the October 18 national protest against the use of sweatshop labor by American companies, Nike, the Pantagruel of the sweatshop trade, issued a press release announcing the conclusions of a self-serving report on wages at its Asian factories that the company had commissioned from a "prestigious university". The university turned out to be Dartmouth and the findings were hailed by Nike as proving it pays its young workers robust wages.

Nike's self serving report from a "prestigious university" turned out to be trash from young Dartmouth right-wingers.

But when *Our Little Secret* called the report's author, Professor Robert Massey, to request a copy of the report, Massey told us that "it wasn't finished or ready for publication". Massey, who chuckled at Nike's pre-emptive strike, admitted that much of the research for the report had been conducted by Dartmouth students. Following in the footsteps of Dartmouth alumna Laura Ingraham, these researchers, eyes no doubt fixed on internships at rightwing think tanks or the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, determined that the $90 a month brought in by some Nike workers is much more than a living wage. Indeed, the students concluded that this awesome sum enabled Nike workers to purchase food, shelter, clothes and have money left over for "discretionary spending" and retirement savings. It would take the average Nike worker in Vietnam 120 years of work to pay total tuition costs at Dartmouth.

Knight of Darkness

Back in 1994 we were the first to flash the spotlight on a man now at the heart of the Clinton campaign finance scandal: Peter Knight. Knight is the former Gore staffer and high-priced lobbyist at the firm of Wunder, Diefendorfer, Cannon and Thelan who was picked to head up the Clinton/Gore re-election campaign. CounterPunch reported that Knight used his ties to Gore to secure lobbying contracts worth between $10,000 and $25,000 a month from some of the nation's most environmentally atrocious companies, including timber giant Kimberly-Clark, waste hauler Browning Ferris Industries, Lockheed Martin (now a major player in radioactive waste), and Waste Conversion Systems. An October 17 story in the Washington Post by Bob Woodward details Knight's services for Molten Metals Technologies, a hazardous waste firm. Knight helped the firm win a $9 million Department of Energy contract, which was awarded on the same day the company donated $15,000 to the DNC. Knight's remuneration was robust. He received $80,000 a year in cash and nearly $100,000 in stock options. According to deposition transcripts quoted in Woodward's story, Knight appears to have committed perjury when he denied soliciting the campaign contribution from Molten Metal, a claim contradicted by Molten Metal executives and DNC records.

But *Our Little Secret* can add much to the Knight story than you'll find in Woodward's opus. For example, there is the relationship between Peter Knight and Thomas Grumbly, and the Fluor Corporation, a CIA-linked construction firm. In the summer of 1996, Fluor was awarded the $5 billion contract to manage the clean up of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation only a month after the company gave the DNC a check for $100,000. The Fluor contract was OK'd by then Deputy Secretary of Energy Thomas Grumbly, a former Gore staffer. At the time the contribution was made to the DNC, Fluor's Washington lobbyist was none other than Peter Knight.

Grumbly gave Fluor the contract despite the company's record of dangerously slipshod practices and overbilling at the DoE's Fernald site in Ohio. Indeed, Fluor's handling of the Ohio

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nuclear plant was so unremittingly incompetent that the DOE was finally compelled to fire the company. The company's record at Hanford is even more awful. There have been three major explosions in the last year, one occurring next to the largest stockpile of plutonium in the United States. On four occasions Hanford workers have been exposed to radiation, though the company tried to hide this fact from its employees and federal regulators.

The Fluor saga is only one episode in a much larger scandal, wherein the nation's largest defense companies are now reaping billions in federal contracts for the job of cleaning up the toxic mess left behind during the arms build up of the Cold War. This new largesse comes as a huge gift courtesy of Al Gore's reinventing government initiative, which called for wide-spread privatization of the nation's DOE sites.

MI5 Targets Victoria Brittain

Try to find out what's going on almost anywhere in Africa in the mainstream press and you won't find much outside the work of Victoria Brittain, who's been a reporter and editor for many years at the (London) Guardian, of which she is now deputy foreign editor. She's been consistent, well-informed and politically principled. For all of these reasons she's now under savage assault by Britain's national security establishment, whose MI5 branch has spent over $1 million in surveillance operations against her, including a scheme to burgle Brittain's house which involved the FBI arresting her daughter in New York on trumped up charges.

The story begins in Ghana in the mid-1980s, a time when the CIA was making repeated attempts to topple the government of Jerry Rawlings. His intelligence chief was Kojo Tsikata, a revolutionary associate of Patrice Lumumba, who had later fought with the MPLA in Angola. Tsikata managed to expose the whole of the CIA network of agents in Ghana, all of whom had to be flown hurriedly out of the country by the Agency and relocated in the US at a cost of $12 million.

In 1982 three of Ghana's high court judges were assassinated, along with a military officer. Amartey Kwei, ringleader of the attack, tried to divert suspicion to Tsikata. The night before his execution Kwei called for a Catholic confessor and a government official and retracted the allegation. The Ghanian opposition, some say with the connivance of the CIA and British Secret Intelligence Service, tried to sustain the story of Tsikata's implication. Reviewing all the evidence Ghana's attorney general fully exonerated Tsikata.

A decade later, in June of 1992, the (London) Independent ran an attack on Rawlings that resuscitated the charges against Tsikata, who had by now retired. Tsikata decided to sue the newspaper and began amassing from sympathetic African leaders the very considerable financial warchest — more than $500,000 — required.

An MI5 scheme to burgle Brittain's house involved the FBI arresting her daughter in New York on trumped up charges.

At this time Tsikata was chief negotiator in efforts to end the Liberian civil war and contacted Brittain, an old friend, who referred him to a well-known solicitor, Geoffrey Bindman. Bindman said Tsikata would be required to lodge a large sum with the British courts and also a substantial deposit for lawyers' fees. Since Tsikata had no bank account in England Brittain agreed that he could remit the necessary sums to her account at Abbey National building society and she would pass them on to Bindman.

MI5 now enters the story. Alerted that large sums were passing through Brittain's account, MI5 mounted a huge operation. According to David Shayler, a retired agent who published a sensational account of the surveillance in the Mail on Sunday newspaper on September 25 of this year, "the old guard in MI5 became highly excited at the prospect of investigating a journalist from The Guardian. The director of the branch called it, in my presence, 'the most exciting thing to happen in the last 10 years.'"

Brittain's phone was tapped. She was continually followed. In 1995 there was a plan to burgle her London home and plant a bug. According to Shayler the idea was to wait till Brittain was out of the country and, as an additional precaution to prevent her daughter from a chance visit, have the FBI arrest this daughter and hold her "on a trumped up charge". Eventually MI5 concluded the risks of being caught were too high. Of particular interest to MI5 was that it determined some of the money passing through Brittain's account to Bindman came from Libyan sources. Shayler wrote that in the end MI5 concluded that the Libyans were attempting to curry favor with the Ghanians by paying Tsikata's legal bills and that "MI5 concluded its suspicions had been entirely groundless".

Brittain insists, and Abbey National backs her up, that beyond noting Tsikata's money passing through the account, she had no way of knowing its precise origins. After an inquiry, the Guardian's editor, Alan Rusbridger, fully exonerated Brittain of any imputation that she might have been doing anyting more than helping an old friend transfer money for his court case. But both The Guardian and Brittain and of course Tsikata have serious enemies.

The Guardian played a major role in exposing corruption in the twilight days of John Major's Conservative government. The Aitken affair (reported here a few months ago) and Sleazegate were Guardian stories that put the final nails in the Tory coffin. The British security services, which helped smear another good Guardian journalist, Richard Gott, still regard Brittain as a prime target. MI5 is now leaking phone-tap transcripts to Stephen Glover, a former Independent executive who been attacking Brittain in The Spectator, the conservative weekly which first smeared Gott.

Under pressure from The Guardian's board of trustees, Russbridger has summoned an independent ombudsman to review all the charges against Brittain, with the entire climate increasingly resembling a witchunt. Meanwhile Tsikata is pursuing his libel action. Amidst all this furor the additional revelation that MI5 has been tapping the phone of Peter Mandelson, close advisor to prime minister Tony Blair and government minister without portfolio has attracted relatively little attention. ■

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How Conservatives Dress for Success
Undercover at the Leadership Institute

Helen Blackwell dwells at length on the subject of how to devour a T-bone steak correctly: "Use the fork to hold in place the piece of meat, while cutting off one small piece of meat with the knife. Then, lay the knife on the right side of the plate, shift the fork to your right hand, and eat that piece of meat. Repeat for EACH piece of meat. DO NOT cut up several pieces of meat at once. I realize the entire system sounds as if it were designed by a vegetarian; but rest assured, using any other method will arouse suspicions that you were brought up to be someone other than a person of refinement."

It's all part of a "crash coure in courtesy" at the Leadership Institute, the nation's premier training ground for conservative political leaders, located in Arlington, Virginia. During the introduction period, held in a long lecture hall flanked by TV screens, I am surrounded by roughly 100 members of the species Homo reaganus. The crowd is overwhelmingly male: There are clean-cut college lads, tanned men in golfing polos, and Texans in cowboy boots.

First to present his credentials is a man running for state representative in New Jersey. His prime qualification is that he married his high school homecoming queen. Next is a would-be senate candidate who promises to help reclaim America from the "liberals who have hijacked it". Now comes one of about half-a-dozen women in attendance — young, blonde and hailing from Texas A&M. "Well, I don't want to run for office myself or learn to be a good candidate". she begins with a giggle. "I'm really just here because someday I want to be a good candidate's wife". At this the audience erupts, baying in approval at this fine display of female subservience and family values.

As a **CounterPunch** agent seeking to gain admittance to the Leadership Institute, I had paid $150 to enroll in the top-rate Candidate Development School. I posed as an up-and-coming right-winger hoping to make a future run for high office. For four days I was indoctrinated in conservative thought by speakers from many outfits, including the National Review, the Heritage Foundation and the Republican Victory Specialists. I observed as my companions traded budget slashing secrets, planned church services for members of Congress and, in the case of the men, crooned at attractive Institute interns. I heard from Rep. John Cooksey of Louisiana, one of our instructors, that women make good campaign staffers because they "are more detail-oriented than men". I learned that the easiest way to make conservatives feel comfortable is to utter the hilarious word "homosexual" (which if said with a slight lisp was certain to make the audience tweet and twitter).

The easiest way to make conservatives comfortable is to utter the hilarious word "homosexual".

Perhaps the most important tool I received was a 500-page resource book that offered tutoring in key conservative issues (taxes, gun control, abortion), pointers on public speaking, a primer in campaign finance law, advice on fundraising and even tips on "how to parade". When it comes to the latter, the Leadership Institute recommends that candidates wear jeans or similar common man clothing, avoid riding in cars and make sure to mingle with the plebes on the parade route, have candy to pass out to kids and trickets such as bumperstickers and brochures to hand to older folk. Also included in the resource book was a statement of philosophy that contained a refreshingly direct summation of the cornerstone of conservative belief: "The conviction that civilized society requires orders and classes against the notion of a classless society."

The Leadership Institute was founded in 1977 by Morton Blackwell, a rabid right-winger who went on to serve in the Reagan White House. Blackwell, who currently serves as the organization's president, established the Institute to identify, train and elect Republican candidates. The Institute claims to have graduated almost 15,000 ambitious right-wingers and its Alumni Hall is bedecked with portraits of conservative icons such as Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Grover Norquist, the superstar of tax reform and intimate of House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

The Institute's instructors and supporters include Rep. Helen Chenoweth, the Boadicea of Idaho, columnist Robert Novak and the revered Senator Jesse Helms. The latter sits on the Institute's 70-member Congressional Advisory Board, which provides Blackwell & Co. with spiritual advice and guidance.

Students at the Institute can take seminars on everything from starting up conservative campus publications to right-wing use of the Internet. It also offers semester-long internships for college students, who are urged to return to their universities and "fight the Left". One fervent Institute graduate, we were told, has sued the University of Wisconsin for its "immoral policy" of allocating student funds to gay campus organizations. Post-university graduates receive help from the Institute's Employment Placement Service, with alumni going on to work as staff assistants to members of Congress, editors of right-wing magazines and denizens of beltway think-tanks.

The Candidate Development School prepares students to run for public office and promises graduates a "ready-made network of powerful new friends". I tried to blend in with my classmates — a mix of campus activists and 30-something conservatives preparing an inaugural run for public office — by occasionally muttering about the need to ban abortion and cheering speakers' calls for gutting government agencies. There were but five non-Anglo students and the Institute's only foray into minority outreach came in the form of a talk by the director of BAMPAC, the Black American Political Action Committee.

While well fed and watered, students were subjected to a grueling schedule of lectures and presentations from grand poobahs of the conservative cause.

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Chunky, bearded, and sporting monstrous spectacles, Grover Norquist informed my class that "taxes equal theft". He urged conservatives to set aside differences and build coalitions, saying, "If you can just keep the Christians from taking guns away from the NRA and keep the NRA from throwing condoms at the Christian kids, you'll be able to band together in the common fight against the Left."

Karen Miller of the Heritage Foundation recommended that candidates should accept campaign help from any volunteers, even undesirables like dimwitted high school students, the homeless and conservative gays. Miller also advised us to win sympathy from Jack and Jill Lunchbucket by working at blue collar jobs — only briefly, of course — before running for office. Having thereby immersed oneself in the world of labor, the candidate can claim to understand the harsh realities of life among the downtrodden.

Our class was treated to a lengthy presentation by old cold war zealot Frank Gaffney, director of the Center for Security Policy. Gaffney painted a lurid portrait of national insecurity, saying that the United States is caught between fundamentalist "rogue" regimes seeking to acquire nuclear weapons and the imminent threat of communist resurgence in the former Soviet Republics. Yeltsin was once a member of the Communist Politburo, Gaffney warned, and "the KGB is just as active as it ever was".

An even bigger menace is posed by deadly hordes of "Chicoms", Gaffney's code word for Chinese Communists. Seemingly benign, thousands of Red Chinese study at universities in the United States and present a "counter intelligence problem of the first order". "I don't want to be racist here," Gaffney snorted, "but these people are really good at the hard sciences and are under threat of harm to their families if they do not release all of their class notes and diagrams of nuclear technology, hi-tech computers and current defense information when they go home." Gaffney ended with a pitch for continued funding for the Star Wars program.

Newt's troops were badly burned on environmental issues and the Leadership Institute made sure to tell us how to defend ourselves on the eco front. Our chief advisers were Becky Dunlop, secretary of natural resources under Governor George Allen of Virginia, and her husband, George. The Dunlops defined environmentalism as the answer liberals have devised to the question of "How can we stop economic activity?" They lauded the free market as the sure path to wise management of natural resources and, waxing Panglossian, enthused that in the US, "everywhere you look, the environment is getting better!"

None the less, conservative office seekers must take steps to defuse charges that they are insensitive to environmental issues. In a strategy similar to Newt's recommendation that conservatives arrange for photo-ops at the zoo, the Dunlops encouraged us to join groups like Ducks Unlimited or the Wild Turkey Federation in seeking to preempt political attacks by eco-terrorists.

To foil political attacks by eco-terrorists, conservatives are urged to join Ducks Unlimited.

After the talk, I asked Becky Dunlop how a candidate should try to win support from generally green constituencies, such as Native Americans. "Well," she said, "some Indians are pantheistic, which mean that these people actually worship nature, and you can't win them over. And in general, reservations are pretty socialistic enterprises." Still, she said, even a candidate who supports mining on Indian territory can strike political pay dirt with Native Americans by stressing principles of technology, science and wise management.

In addition to our political drills, we also received extensive advice about manners and breeding. Helen Blackwell, wife of the Leadership Institute's head honcho, authored a hand-out we received for a "Crash Course in Courtesy". Blackwell warned that her rules would be frowned upon by espousers of "radical feminism", but those wishing to "uphold the standards of Western civilization while those about you are falling into barbarism" should know:

"A gentlemen opens doors for a lady; a lady permits him to do so."

"A gentlemen precedes a lady going downstairs to catch her in case she falls."

"A gentlemen does not enter a lady's bedroom (or vice-versa) unless they are married. In a hotel or office, the rule is that is they must be in a room alone for some reason, the door must be left ajar."

To hear it from the Leadership Institute, only a standardized dress code is more vital to the conservative cause than good manners. Having calculated the psychological implications of color, the Institute teaches that navy blue suits are the only appropriate attire for men. Accompanied by a white or light blue shirt and a "boring symmetric tie", the conservative candidate can't go wrong. All other fashion choices, we were warned would detract from the goal of establishing visual ties of trust between the candidate and the voter.

The only suitable colors for women are navy blue, red and yellow. Pastels or bright hues are definite no-no's. Skirt suits are always better than pant suits and accessories, if absolutely necessary, should be gold and nearly invisible. Now a proud graduate of the Leadership Institute, I'll never wear purple again. ■

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(Smoking, cont. from p. 1)

amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. In Washington state, a group of prisoners filed suit over their exposure to second-hand smoke. AG Christine Gregoire defended Washington state's Department of Corrections, arguing that second-hand smoke posed no significant health danger.

Gregoire expressed rather markedly harsher sentiments concerning the risks posed by tobacco when she announced Washington's lawsuit against the tobacco industry at a June 1996 press conference at a Seattle hospital. "The tobacco industry has targeted our kids, withheld safer products and deliberately misled the public about the safety of smoking," she said at that time. "This lawsuit is intended to make the tobacco cartel play by the same rules as other businesses."

The District of Columbia has thumbed its nose at the Supreme Court's decision. Rejecting a lawsuit filed by three prison plaintiffs, the city's Department of Corrections charged categorically that second-hand smoke poses no danger whatsoever to human health. Simultaneously, local health authorities have imposed widespread restrictions on smoking outside prison on the grounds that second-hand smoke is a menace to city residents.

DC federal judge Stanley Sporkin rebuffed the DOC and granted an injunction to the plaintiffs. Sporkin flayed the DOC's attorney for asking the court to "go along with its repudiation of [the city's] findings concerning the ill effects of second-hand smoke", calling it an "unconscionable position". The judge was especially irate when the DOC's counsel opposed introduction of the District's policy on "Smoke Free Environments" on the basis that it was hearsay!

Tens of thousands of prisoners nationwide seek treatment each month for medical conditions that are smoking-related or worsened by exposure to tobacco smoke. In Florida alone, state senator Locke Burt claims smoking related illness add $41 million to prisoner health care costs annually.

Yet AG Butterworth has defended Florida's attempts to promote tobacco use at prisons and other state facilities. In 1996 the Florida DOC bought more than $5 million worth of tobacco products, which it sold to prisoners at a 33 percent markup. Gross receipts from tobacco sales in Florida prisons that year exceeded $7.5 million.

Stephen Krigbaum, an attorney for Philip Morris, rocked the Florida state tobacco litigation team when he introduced documents showing that for many years the state made cigarettes at two prison tobacco factories. The cigarettes — unfiltered and containing "some of the highest tar and nicotine levels, [and] thus particularly unhealthy", according to one state report — were distributed free to prisoners and mental patients, and sold to hospitals and county jails.

Under Florida law, it is illegal to give or sell cigarettes to minors. But a 1993 state memo unearthed by Krigbaum revealed that Florida had spent state money to buy cigarettes from a private company for distribution to juvenile detainees. Philip Morris's attorney argued that the tobacco industry should not be required to pay for Medicaid costs that were caused by the state's promotion of tobacco. Florida was so embarrassed that it agreed to settle out of court earlier this year.

Efforts to ban prison smoking have been opposed by most states. Likewise, when President Clinton recently restricted smoking on federal property he exempted prisons from the law.

The most vociferous opposition has come from guards and administrators, who predict that a ban would greatly increase prison violence. Typical was Florida DOC sergeant S.D. Williams who told the state legislature, "If you take these cigarettes away from them boys, you're going to have officers going to the hospital in large numbers."

What makes such protests ring hollow is that these same groups have pushed for draconian prison policies that have done a lot to make prisoners "tense": cutting of education funds, elimination of television, drastic cuts in visits, elimination of personal property, the reintroduction of chain gangs, among others.

By the way, Philip Morris stock went up 31 percent last year. That's a major reason why 45 states have millions of dollars in state pension funds invested in tobacco stocks. ■

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Journalism for grown ups, reporting for idealists without illusions

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